

TOWN AND COUNTY OF NANTUCKET  
**SELECT BOARD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

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**Select Board's April 1, 2020 Remote Participation Meeting**

**2. COVID-19 Weekly Update:**

**g. Public Comments Related to COVID-19**

(Questions taken from Town of Nantucket YouTube Channel "Chat" feature. Repeat questions and questions answered during the Select Board meeting have been removed).

1. Melissa Murphy: Why can't the SB issue the order? Why do we have to wait for the BOH?  
**Please see a response to this question on the Town's Covid-19 [website](#)**
  
2. K Splaine: Could the hospital please release an aggregate # of assumed, but not verified cases of Covid-19 they are monitoring? Given the scarcity of tests, this # would provide a better sense of prevalence.  
**For most of the COVID-19 cases we have confirmed, we know of presumed positive family members and social contacts, all of who are appropriately quarantined but not counted in the total number of confirmed cases. In a household with a COVID-19-positive patient, they have likely already spread the virus to those in close contact, before their symptoms developed. If those people develop symptoms a few days later, or not at all, they are presumed to be infected and not necessarily tested. The entire family of a COVID-19 patient is ordered to remain quarantined together for 14 days after exposure, and receives extensive CDC-issued instructions and guidance to prevent further infections.**  
  
**In addition to being quarantined, contacts of positive patients are instructed to monitor their symptoms and seek help if needed. These individuals are educated on the most current testing indications and that in their particular situation there is not always clear guidance, but clinical judgment plays a large role. We also understand there is a false negative rate to consider with the COVID-19 testing, and not only do we recommend to those who have tested negative to maintain**

isolation, we have decided to retest some of those individuals in which there is a strong suspicion of a COVID-19 diagnosis.

**The bottom line is that the coronavirus is here on our island, and there are almost surely more cases than have been confirmed.**

**Please refer to the Nantucket Cottage Hospital [website](#)**

3. Frank Daily:

So for those of us who are trying to stay compliant AND service legitimate maintenance items, what are we to do? Break the mandate by fixing legitimate issues?

**Maintenance issues are not considered essential but if there is an emergency repair for the well-being and safety of residents in the home or to ensure the safety of the structure then a waiver would be possible. Please refer to the Board of Health's revised supplemental [order](#). Waivers involving buildings should be directed to the Building Commission [pmurphy@nantucket-ma.gov](mailto:pmurphy@nantucket-ma.gov).**

4. Frank Daily:

Stay in compliance then be liable for damage to our clients properties? Most of us are trying to do the right thing. Please help us do the right thing.

**The "right thing" is to Stay at Home unless there is an emergency situation.**

5. Zac Vk:

Hey select board, stop lying/making up numbers about the amount of workers on the boat

**The Select Board was taking into consideration information given to it by the Emergency Management team. The team relied on information given to it by a police officer who made an observational estimate as to the number of passengers disembarking from the Hy-line on Wednesday morning. The team misinterpreted the estimate as being a head count. The officer's observations in fact were higher than the actual numbers we have now received from the Hy-line. The Hy-line has reported that the number of passengers coming off the boat that arrives here at 8:45 am was 44 on Wednesday morning. That is actually a doubling of the number they reported from Tues, 3/31 (20).**

6. Sarah Treanor Bois:

If someone is a resident from another state but gets a test on Nantucket, are they reported for Nantucket or their home community? Heard an odd report from another state.

**All NCH testing numbers are for people tested on the island at the hospital. They are reported regardless of their home state or primary residence.**

7. Nickleen Faucher:

Can you mandate some sort of face covering requirement if people need to go food shopping? There are reports of other countries requiring this where the curve has flattened quickly.

**We have been advised that the White House and CDC are reviewing whether to change the recommendation regarding the public wearing masks. NCH is still seeking medical grade equipment donations, and homemade masks are not discouraged if people have one and want to wear it. Until then they cannot be mandated.**

8. Rickathertonack: Would you please consider posting all waivers granted under the various orders on the Town website? Thank you.  
**Yes, please refer to the Town's Coronavirus Response [page](#)**
9. Amanda D: Is the town going to be issuing permits for work over the summer? Such as minor working permits for high school students or for people who come from other countries?  
**This is not a Town or County of Nantucket matter. The Town/County does not issue permits for work orders.**
10. Melissa Murphy: If you have legitimate issues that need repairing, all we need to do is get permission by emailing the board of health, Correct?  
**If you have an emergency situation with a building, you may email the Nantucket Building Commissioner ([pmurphy@nantucket-ma.gov](mailto:pmurphy@nantucket-ma.gov)) if it is a building issue; or the DPW Director ([rmcneil@nantucket-ma.gov](mailto:rmcneil@nantucket-ma.gov)) if it is a roadway issue.**
11. PhotoHoenk: S&S employees doing a fantastic job, but is there a way that can be stressed more oversight with social distancing guidelines  
**Social distancing recommendations for all grocery and convenience stores has been sent to them by the Health Department in English, Spanish, and Portuguese for implementation in their stores. The Health Department staff is checking in with all of these stores on a regular basis.**
12. Lynell Vollans: Have any \$1000 fines been issued? Perhaps the fines would act as deterrent for people who are on job sites.  
**So far, voluntary compliance has been achieved; if the Town encounters "repeat offenders" or continued work after being informed to stop, a fine of up to \$1,000 will be issued.**
13. Stanley Polchinski: The BOH and SB need to work on a process to get things working again. Many of us cannot survive on the benefits being offered and further many will not qualify for any benefits.  
  
**The PLUS Department has been tasked with developing a plan with input from the Nantucket Builders Association and Nantucket Cottage Hospital to allow work at job sites that can be done within safety guidelines issued by the State; similarly, the Natural Resources Department has been tasked with developing a plan to allow landscape work within safety**

**guidelines as well. In both instances the work allowed would have to be done with 100% confidence that it will not contribute to the spread of Covid-19.**

14. Gun4Hire Media:

We all want our seasonal restaurants to be able to open - my question is how are we monitoring that the staff are keeping appropriate distance, and adhering to social distance guidelines, etc? **Seasonal food permits will not be issued until the Stay at Home Order is lifted. Food preparation is highly regulated by the FDA food code. As such, strict sanitizing procedures are in place to prevent contamination of food and employees. Regular checks for compliance by the Health Department are a part of that process.**

15. Derek Tibbetts:

Has the Town Leadership considered forfeiting their salaries while the rest of us are out of work? Countless CEO's across the country are showing leadership this way.

**The Board is not sure what is meant by “Town Leadership”; however, ALL of the Town’s department heads are currently working full time (or more) as well as many essential personnel including public safety. Town employees who are required to stay at home because of the Governor’s Stay-at-Home Order are continuing to be paid (as is the standard throughout the State).**

16. Kevin Kelley:

If the boat is the lynchpin in this, then why not have the National Guard at the boat? If you don’t live here or aren’t essential, then get back right on the boat or mandatory quarantine?

**Passengers are being advised as to the State’s Order that persons who travelled from out of state must self-quarantine for 14 days; signage is up at all boat locations in Nantucket and in Hyannis; neither the Town nor the National Guard has the authority to prohibit people from travelling to and from the island.**

17. Amy Eldridge:

Of the number of people who have tested positive for the virus and those who have been put on 14 quarantined but not met the criteria for the test does that mean there could be more positives

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18. polyagencheva: Can DBA's registered here on Nantucket apply for unemployment? **Please refer to the State's guidance on unemployment available here on the Town's business and cultural organization resource [page](#)**
19. Gilbert Martel: We have not heard from Chief Pittman on how many people have been arriving on Nantucket on a day by day basis **We are unaware of any requirement or request for Chief Pittman to report on this. We have access to Hy-line and SSA daily passenger numbers but are not reporting on those as those numbers are not compiled by the Town.**
20. John Kuszpa: Could the National Guard be interviewing people leaving the boat & recommending quarantine, would this be feasible? **No. The National Guard's mission is law enforcement, not this type of activity. As was demonstrated in Rhode Island, this type of activity should be done by public health professionals. At this time, we do not have those resources.**
21. Michael pearson: The current law is set out in Governor baker's order and guidance letter from his legal staff. Construction essential and Town orders to the contrary invalid. What legal authority is Town relying on? **Under Massachusetts General Law (MGL) Chapter 111, Section 6, the Board of Health is authorized to enact an order(s) to address a public health emergency – such as the COVID19 pandemic. This order may be stricter (but not less strict) than a Governor's Order intended to address a public health emergency.**

**For more information please refer to the information provided on the Town's Coronavirus Response [page](#)**

[end]